

Message Text

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DEPT ALSO PASS TO DR EHRLICH, OIH/DHEW

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: WHO

SUBJ: REPORT ON EB PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING, WHO,

NOVEMBER 1-6

REF: GENEVA 9352

1. SUMMARY: REFTEL REPORTED GENERAL ACCEPTANCE BY THE EB PROGRAM COMMITTEE OF DG MAHLER'S PROPOSED STRATEGY (PC/EB59/WP/2) FOR IMPLEMENTING WHA RESOLUTION 29.48. BEFORE REACHING CONSENSUS, HOWEVER, THE COMMITTEE REQUIRED THE WHO SECRETARIAT TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, INCLUDING 1) A TABLE IDENTIFYING FOR 1977 ALL "TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES" (TOTALLING DOLS 75,208,719) VERSUS "OTHER ACTIVITIES" (TOTALLING DOLS 71,691,281); AND 2) A DRAFT DOCUMENT DESCRIBING HOW TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN WHO HAS EVOLVED INTO TECHNICAL COOPERATION. MISSION SUMMARY OF THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS AND OF THE NEW DOCUMENTATION APPEARS BELOW AS ITEM 2 IN PARA 4 OF REFTEL. END SUMMARY.

2. IDENTIFYING AND DEFINING TECHNICAL COOPERATION.

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THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE FOLLOWED UP ON DG MAHLER'S REQUEST

TO FOCUS DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPTS BEHIND HIS POLICY PAPER (PARA 7 OF REFTTEL) BY SPENDING SEVERAL HOURS DISCUSSING TECHNICAL COOPERATION, NOT IN TERMS OF INCREASING BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS TO TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS, BUT OF REACHING AN UNDERSTANDING OF POLICY DIRECTIVES OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY. THE AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATIVE URGED DISCUSSION OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE WIDEST SENSE TO AVOID HAVING MAHLER'S PAPER BECOME A ONE-TIME POLICY STATEMENT THAT MIGHT EVENTUALLY STRAIGHT-JACKET THE ORGANIZATION. THE SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE SUPPORTED BY SEVERAL OTHERS REQUESTED THE SECRETARIAT TO PREPARE OVERNIGHT A WRITTEN STATEMENT ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION FOR COMMITTEE DISCUSSION THAT WOULD EXPAND ON THE EXPLANATION GIVEN IN PARA 2.6, PAGE 6, OF MAHLER'S POLICY PAPER (FORWARDED TO DEPT 1 NOV.). DR MAHLER AGREED THE CONCEPT NEEDED MORE CLARIFICATION. THE SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE JOINED BY SEVERAL OTHERS ALSO ASKED FOR A NEW TABLE SHOWING WHO ACTIVITIES IN 1977 INCLUDED UNDER AND EXCLUDED FROM TECHNICAL COOPERATION.

3. IN SHORT, THE COMMITTEE QUICKLY REALIZED IT WAS DEALING WITH TECHNICAL COOPERATION ON TWO LEVELS: 1) PRAGMATIC, OR DETERMINING HOW WELL MAHLER IS SHIFTING RESOURCES TOWARD TECHNICAL COOPERATION TO MEET THE 60 PERCENT TARGET; 2) CONCEPTUAL, OR ASKING MAHLER TO FURTHER EXPLAIN WHERE TECHNICAL COOPERATION, AS HE DEFINES IT, WILL EVENTUALLY LEAD THE ORGANIZATION. (" TECHNICAL COOPERATION MEANS ACTIVITIES WHICH HAVE A HIGH DEGREE OF SOCIAL RELEVANCE FOR MEMBER STATES IN THE SENSE THAT THEY ARE DIRECTED TOWARD DEFINED NATIONAL HEALTH GOALS AND THAT THEY WILL CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY AND SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE HEALTH STATUS OF THEIR POPULATIONS THROUGH METHODS THAT THEY CAN APPLY NOW AND AT A COST THEY CAN AFFORD NOW, AND WHICH CONFORM TO THE PRINCIPLE AND AIM OF DEVELOPING NATURAL SELF RELIANCE IN MATTERS OF HEALTH"...MAHLER).

4. AS TO PRAGMATIC CONSIDERATIONS (SEE PARA 2.6.2 PAGE 6, OF POLICY PAPER), COMMITTEE MEMBERS EVENTUALLY AGREED THAT "THE USE OF THE 1977 BASELINE ENSURED COMPLIANCE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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QUANTITATIVE FINANCIAL TERMS WITH THE PROGRAM POLICY DIRECTIVES OF THE ASSEMBLY IN WHA RESOLUTION 29.48 AND, FURTHER, THAT IF THE BASELINE IDENTIFICATION OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION HAD BEEN CHANGED, THIS WOULD NECESSARILY HAVE RESULTED IN CHANGES OF BOTH THE BASELINE PERCENTAGE AND THE TARGET PERCENTAGE ENVISAGED BY THE ASSEMBLY". (DRAFT CONCLUSION THAT MAY APPEAR IN THIS FORM IN THE COMMITTEE REPORT IN DECEMBER).

5. COMMITTEE MEMBERS ALSO FOUND USEFUL THE NEW TABLE SUMMARIZING FOR BASELINE PURPOSES WHO ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN AND EXCLUDED FROM TECHNICAL COOPERATION. IT WAS NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT CERTAIN ACTIVITIES EXCLUDED FOR BASELINE PURPOSES, SUCH AS COSTS OF HEADQUARTERS HEALTH PROGRAM ACTIVITIES, COULD IN REALITY BE CALLED TECHNICAL COOPERATION. THUS, IT WAS AGREED THERE WAS A DISTINCTION BETWEEN "TECHNICAL COOPERATION" AND "OTHER ACTIVITIES" IN THAT THE FORMER REFLECTED DIRECT COOPERATION WITH COUNTRIES; THE LATTER, INDIRECT SUPPORT SERVICES REQUIRED FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION DELIVERY AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL.

6. AS TO CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS GENERALLY STATED IT WAS NECESSARY TO COME UP WITH A DEFINITION OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEABLE TO ALL. DIFFERENCES IN VIEWPOINT HELD BY SOME REGIONAL COMMITTEES, FOR EXAMPLE, DIRECT VERSUS INDIRECT TECHNICAL COOPERATION, WERE POINTED OUT ("INDIRECT" BENEFITS TO MEMBER STATES INCLUDE INFORMATION GATHERING AND TRANSFER, METHODOLOGY DEVELOPMENT, EXPERT COMMITTEES, PUBLICATIONS, AND OTHERS). ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE AND MAINTENANCE OF HEADQUARTERS AND REGIONAL OFFICES WERE NOT CONSIDERED PART OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION. REGARDING WHETHER WHO REPRESENTATIVES SERVE A USEFUL TECHNICAL COOPERATION FUNCTION (REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EAST ASIA SAID "NO"), COMMITTEE MEMBERS FELT WHO REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD BE DISCONTINUED IN COUNTRIES WHERE THEY DO NOT SERVE THIS FUNCTION (ROLE OF THE WHO REPRESENTATIVE IS SUBJECT OF CURRENT STUDY OF EXECUTIVE BOARD).

7. FINALLY, COMMITTEE MEMBERS WERE IN AGREEMENT THAT TECHNICAL COOPERATION SHOULD BE LIMITED TO OFFICIAL USE

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TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES AS PRESENTED IN THE MAHLER PAPER AND FURTHER EXPOUNDED UPON BY BOTH DR MAHLER AND MR FURTH WERE, IN NO WAY, A MASK FOR THE OLD TERM, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, BUT IMPLIED A NEW CARRYING OUT OF WHO'S CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE.

8. THE NEW TABLE AND PAPER ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION MENTIONED ABOVE HAVE BEEN FORWARDED TO THE DEPARTMENT. SEPTELS FOLLOW ON REMAINING ITEMS DISCUSSED BY PROGRAM COMMITTEE. BRUNGART

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